

OMB's Program Assessment Rating Tool (PART)

APHIS' PART evaluations to date:

| | FY 2005 PART— Monitoring and Surveillance Programs | FY 2006 PART— Pest and Disease Exclusion Programs |
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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AQI • Animal Welfare | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Animal Health • Monitoring System • Emergency Management • Systems Pest Detection • Animal and Plant Health Regulatory Enforcement • Plant Methods Development Labs • Veterinary Biologics • Veterinary Diagnostics • WS Methods Development | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Trade Issues Management and Resolution Import/Export • Fruit Fly Exclusion and Detection • Foreign Animal Disease/ • Foot-and-Mouth Disease • Cattle Ticks • Screwworm • Tropical Bont • Tick |

About the Program Assessment Rating Tool

OMB describes the Program Assessment Rating Tool (PART) as a diagnostic tool. The main objective of the PART review is to improve program performance. The PART assessments help link performance to budget decisions and provide a basis for making recommendations to improve results. Each question has elements/criteria you must meet when answering the question in Yes/No form. In addition, you need to provide evidence of how you meet the criteria. The following are descriptions of each focus area and examples of the types of questions we are required to answer.

1. Program Purpose and Design: To assess whether the program design and purpose are clear and defensible. A clear understanding of program purpose is essential to setting program goals, measures, and targets; maintaining

focus, and managing the program. Potential source documents and evidence for answering questions in this section include authorizing legislation, agency strategic plans, performance plans/performance budgets, and other agency reports.

- Is the program purpose clear?
- Does the program address a specific and existing problem, interest, or need?
- Is the program designed so that it is not redundant or duplicative of any other Federal, State, local or private effort?
- Is the program design free of major flaws that would limit the program's effectiveness or efficiency?
- Is the program design effectively targeted, so that resources will reach intended beneficiaries and/or otherwise address the program's purpose directly?

2. Strategic Planning: To assess whether the agency sets valid annual and long-term goals for the program. This section focuses on program planning, priority setting, and resource allocation. Key elements include an assessment of whether the program has a limited number of performance measures with ambitious – yet achievable – targets, to ensure planning, management, and budgeting are strategic and focused.

- Does the program have a limited number of specific long-term performance measures that focus on outcomes and meaningfully reflect the purpose of the program?
- Does the program have ambitious targets and timeframes for its long-term measures?
- Does the program have a limited number of specific annual performance measures that can demonstrate progress toward achieving the program's long-term goals?

- Does the program have baselines and ambitious targets for its annual measures?
 - Do all partners (including grantees, sub-grantees, contractors, cost-sharing partners, and other government partners) commit to and work toward the annual and/or long-term goals of the program?
 - Are independent evaluations of sufficient scope and quality conducted on a regular basis or as needed to support program improvements and evaluate effectiveness and relevance to the problem, interest, or need?
 - Are budget requests explicitly tied to accomplishment of the annual and long-term performance goals, and are the resource needs presented in a complete and transparent manner in the program's budget?
 - Has the program taken meaningful steps to correct its strategic planning deficiencies?
 - Are all regulations issued by the program/agency necessary to meet the stated goals of the program, and do all regulations clearly indicate how the rules contribute to achievement of the goals?
- 3. Program Management:** To rate agency management of the program, including financial oversight and program improvement efforts.

- Does the agency regularly collect timely and credible performance information, including information from key program partners, and use it to manage the program and improve performance?
- Are Federal managers and program partners (including grantees, subgrantees, contractors, cost-sharing partners, and other government partners) held accountable for cost, schedule and performance results?
- Are funds (Federal and partners) obligated in a timely manner and spent for the intended purpose?
- Does the program have procedures (e.g., competitive sourcing/cost comparisons, IT improvements, appropriate incentives) to measure and achieve efficiencies and cost effectiveness in program execution?

- Does the program collaborate and coordinate effectively with related programs?
- Does the program use strong financial management practices?
- Has the program taken meaningful steps to address its management deficiencies?
- Did the program seek and take into account the views of all affected parties (e.g., consumers; large and small businesses; State, local and tribal governments; beneficiaries; and the general public) when developing significant regulations?
- Did the program prepare adequate regulatory impact analyses if required by Executive Order 12866, regulatory flexibility analyses if required by the Regulatory Flexibility Act and SBREFA, and cost-benefit analyses if required under the Unfunded Mandates Reform Act; and did those analyses comply with OMB guidelines?
- Does the program systematically review its current regulations to ensure consistency among all regulations in accomplishing program goals?
- Are the regulations designed to achieve program goals, to the extent practicable, by maximizing the net benefits of its regulatory activity?

4. Program Results: To rate program performance on measures and targets reviewed in the strategic planning section and through other evaluations. This section considers whether a program is meeting its long-term and annual performance goals. This section also assesses how well the program compares to similar programs and how effective the program is based on independent evaluations.

- Has the program demonstrated adequate progress in achieving its long-term performance goals?
- Does the program (including program partners) achieve its annual performance goals?
- Does the program demonstrate improved efficiencies or cost effectiveness in achieving program goals each year?

- Does the performance of this program compare favorably to other programs, including government, private, etc. with similar purpose and goals?
- Do independent evaluations of sufficient scope and quality indicate that the program is effective and achieving results?
- Were programmatic goals (and benefits) achieved at the least incremental societal cost and did the program maximize net benefits?

Performance Measurement

The PART emphasizes robust outcome, output, and efficiency measures, because each kind of measure provides valuable information about program performance. Collectively, these measures convey a comprehensive story regarding what products and services agencies provide, how well they do so, and with what result.

Outcome Measures

Outcomes describe the intended result from carrying out a program or activity. They define an event or condition that is external to the program or activity and that is of direct importance to the intended beneficiaries and/or the public. For a tornado warning system, outcomes could be the number of lives saved and property damage averted. While performance measures must distinguish between outcomes and outputs, there must be a reasonable connection between them, with outputs supporting (i.e., leading to) outcomes in a logical fashion.

Output Measures

Outputs describe the level of activity that will be provided over a period of time, including a description of the characteristics (e.g., timeliness) established as standards for the activity. Outputs refer to the internal activities of a program (i.e., the products and services delivered). For example, an output

could be the percentage of warnings that occur more than 20 minutes before a tornado forms.

Efficiency measures

While outcome measures provide valuable insight into program achievement, more of an outcome can be achieved with the same resources if an effective program increases its efficiency. Sound efficiency measures capture skillfulness in executing programs, implementing activities, and achieving results, while avoiding wasted resources. The best efficiency measures capture improvements in program outcomes for a given level of resource use. For example, a program that has an outcome goal of “reduced energy consumption” may have an efficiency measure that shows the value of energy saved in relation to program costs.

*Keep in mind that long-term performance measures should capture part of the benefit of the program.

Long-term vs. annual performance goals

Long-term is defined as covering a long period of time considering the nature of the program, but is consistent with the periods for strategic goals used in the Agency Strategic Plan.

Annual performance goals are the measures and targets affected by an activity in a particular (generally near-term) year.

Long-term and annual measures should be linked.

"What gets measured, gets done." — Peter Drucker

| INPUT | OUTPUT | OUTCOME |
|--|--|--|
| "Amount of resources devoted to a program activity." | "Tabulation, calculation, or recording of activity or effort, expressed in a quantitative or qualitative manner." Example: Performance measures for a job training program | "Assessment of the results of a program activity compared to its intended purpose." Example: Performance measures for a job training program |
| Example: Performance measures for a job training program | | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • \$1,000,000 broken down by object class • 50 FTEs broken down by object class | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 50 courses will be offered • 10,000 people will complete the courses • Exit tests of participants will demonstrate they are competent in at least 85% of skills taught in the training courses | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 8,000 people trained by the program will land and keep their jobs more than 6 months • 90% of those who land jobs will earn the same or more in their new job as in their old one • 75% of those with jobs will report via survey that the skills they learned were important factors in getting the job |